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DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
DIVISION OF WATER QUALITY

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Reply to: State of Utah
Division of Water Quality
Department of Environmental Quality
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-4870

January 28, 1992

Mr. Larry Drew, Manager
Hecla Mining Company
6500 Mineral Drive
Box C-8000
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho 83814-1931

RE: Permitting of Escalante Tailings Pond

Dear Mr. Drew:

The DWQ (Division of Water Quality) recently received Hecla's data and correspondence dated January 10 and January 14, 1992, and correspondence from Parsons, Behle, and Latimer dated January 10, 1992, regarding the permitting and closure of the Escalante tailings pond. This letter is to confirm the outcome of our meeting on January 7, 1992, that the DWQ would review this additional data, and Hecla's request that a ground water discharge permit for the facility not be required. The DWQ had previously required a complete permit application be submitted by January 31, 1992.

In order to review this new information, this deadline will be postponed until we can arrive at a conclusion on Hecla's request. The DWQ will then inform Hecla of its decision on the need to proceed with obtaining a ground water discharge permit.

However, we should clarify one point that we are still of the opinion that due to the nature of the waste, the facility is one which should be permitted. We are reviewing the new information primarily from the standpoint of determining the proper type of compliance monitoring mechanism and establishing an appropriate post closure monitoring period. Establishing the proper mechanism would presumably dictate the proper period for oversighting the facility.

Please contact Mack Croft if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Utah Water Quality Board

Don A. Ostler, P.E.

Executive Secretary

DAO:MGC:mhf

cc: Wayne Thomas P.E., District Engineer
Division of Oil, Gas and Mining
Fred Nelson
Parsons, Behle and Latimer

Q:DREW.LTR

FILE:HECLA MINING COMPANY

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JAN 31 1992

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OIL GAS & MINING